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ABSTRACT

This brief examines a number of key questions and issues raised in the dialogue paper on foreign policy. It makes the case for a rebalancing of Canadian foreign policy priorities in favor of an approach that puts greater emphasis on projecting Canadian values and culture abroad, and more particularly, on how the "globalization of higher education and research" can support broader foreign policy objectives. The brief also outlines how Canadian university students and faculty are critical change agents with untapped potential for serving Canadian foreign policy interests. It also provides several recommendations for how Canada could better seize the opportunities inherent in the globalization of higher education and research to promote Canadian prosperity and security in a strategic and sustainable fashion. (Contains 13 footnotes.) (SLD)

CANADIAN EXCELLENCE IN AND FOR THE WORLD:

**HOW THE GLOBALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND
RESEARCH CONTRIBUTES TO CANADA'S FOREIGN POLICY**

A Brief Submitted by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

to the

Dialogue on Canadian Foreign Policy

conducted by the

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

MAY 1, 2003

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Established in 1911, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada represents more than 90 Canadian public and private not-for-profit universities and university colleges. Our mandate is to foster and promote the interests of higher education, both within Canada and abroad.



Introduction

The following brief is submitted by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) to the foreign policy dialogue currently being conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). AUCC is the national association representing Canada's 93 public and not-for-profit universities and university-level degree-granting colleges. Canada's universities are strongly committed to bringing an international dimension to their teaching, research and community outreach functions with a view to providing graduates with a global perspective, international knowledge and cross-cultural skills. Indeed, given the pace of geo-political, security and economic change in the world today, Canadian universities recognize that it is more important than ever to ensure their students and faculty are "globally literate" with a broader critical perspective on their country and the world that shapes its future. AUCC members therefore welcome the opportunity to provide input toward this stock-taking of Canadian foreign policy, recognizing the timeliness and necessity of such an exercise at this juncture in Canada's diplomacy.¹

The brief will examine a number of the key questions and issues raised in the dialogue paper on foreign policy. First, it will argue for a rebalancing of Canadian foreign policy priorities in favour of an approach that puts greater emphasis on projecting Canadian values and culture abroad, and more particularly, on how the "globalization of higher education and research" can support broader foreign policy objectives. Second, it will outline how Canadian university students and faculty are critical change agents with untapped potential for serving Canadian foreign policy interests. Third, it will provide several recommendations for how Canada could better seize the opportunities inherent in the globalization of higher education and research to promote Canadian prosperity and security in a strategic and sustainable fashion.

Towards a Stronger Third Pillar in Canadian Foreign Policy

Who we are matters in foreign affairs because Canada's place in the world is shaped not only by relationships between foreign governments. As global interconnections grow ever more varied and pervasive, exchanges and relationships have multiplied between groups and individuals across national boundaries. This public diplomacy has become an integral part of how we promote our values, share our experience and influence others abroad.²

In light of the recent global changes outlined in the dialogue paper, the document raises the central question of whether Canada should continue to endorse an approach to its

¹ In addition to this brief, Canadian students and faculty have actively participated in the foreign policy dialogue, including eight AUCC member institutions which hosted town halls events across Canada.

² Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. *A Dialogue on Foreign Policy*, 2003: Section 4, Page 1.

foreign policy based on the three pillars of promoting security, prosperity and Canadian values and culture or whether the current balance should be adjusted. In considering this question, we note that in the electronic debate taking place as part of the foreign policy dialogue, there has been little discussion on the third pillar, particularly given that individual Canadians have been focused on the war with Iraq and relations with the United States. In our view, however, it is precisely because of the underlying conditions driving these global changes that there is call for **greater** emphasis on projecting Canadian values and culture abroad in our country's foreign policy. The third pillar should be leveraged much more effectively in support of Canada's other key foreign policy objectives and be viewed as a key and integrated instrument for helping achieve these goals, particularly over the long-term.

In fact, Canadian values could well be viewed as a unique asset and model that Canada could offer in a world growing increasingly insecure due to religious, cultural, social and economic divisions. Ekos Research – one of Canada's leading research firms in Canadian public opinion – points out that, more than any others, the values of cosmopolitanism, internationalism, and respect for diversity and tolerance increasingly define the Canadian national identity. Ekos' comparative research shows growing divergence of these values when compared, for example, to our American neighbours.³

Therefore, initiatives which disseminate these Canadian values, facilitate intercultural and interfaith understanding, and increase awareness of Canada's strengths are even more critical at a time when we must help promote long-term peace and goodwill in the international community and, as a country, face stiff competition in a globalized economy. Indeed, as Canada's Foreign Minister, Bill Graham, said himself in a recent opinion-piece on the foreign policy dialogue, "An integral part of what Canadians most value and wish to share abroad is our commitment to mutual respect among our diverse communities, and to the peaceful resolution of conflict. These commitments are not only important in their own right, but are an integral part of promoting security and prosperity both for our country and for people around the world".⁴

While we recognize there are many types of initiatives under the banner of the "third pillar", this brief will refer specifically to international academic relations since AUCC is in a unique position to provide insights in this area. As stated in the 1995 foreign policy document, *Canada in the World*, culture, academic relations and education are "vital to Canada's success" and "an important way of advancing our interests in international affairs".⁵

We also suggest that the label "international academic relations", currently used by the department, is perhaps not as useful as the term "globalization of higher education and research". This label is more descriptive of the international environment, more inclusive

³ This research was presented by Frank Graves, President of Ekos Research, at AUCC's semi-annual membership meeting on April 9, 2003.

⁴ Bill Graham, *Globe and Mail*, March 5, 2003: A15.

⁵ Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada in the World* Summary Document, 1995: 2.

of the range of relevant activities and makes more evident the linkage between Canada's foreign policy interests in this area and other key federal government priorities (e.g., Canada's innovation strategy), emphasizing the widely-accepted view that the division between foreign and domestic policy is a false divide in today's environment.

Students and Canada's Foreign Policy

I was fortunate enough to do my graduate studies in Paris, and I can assure you that the experience influenced the patterns of my life a great deal, whether in my familiarity with the French language, or in my international view of societal issues.⁶

When it comes to discussing students, the focus of the dialogue paper is restricted to the issue of promoting a one-way flow of international students into Canada. It makes no mention of the importance of providing similar opportunities for Canadian students to give them an in-depth knowledge of the world, cross-cultural skills and an international perspective. Moreover, when it comes to the flow of international students to Canada, rather than increasing its scholarship funding – which has been used as an effective foreign policy instrument for attracting such students – the federal government is now targeting them as potential immigrants. This current approach could put at risk Canada's reputation as a respected partner in the eyes of foreign governments (especially developing countries concerned about brain drain). It also underlines significant gaps and inconsistencies in public policy, especially in today's global realities.

International education, i.e., a two-way flow of students, has great potential to contribute to Canada's security and prosperity. For example, sending Canadian students abroad and bringing international students to Canada achieves the following: promotes greater intercultural and interfaith understanding; disseminates Canadian values; builds future trade and business connections; and conveys a more modern image of Canada. A recent Conference Board of Canada study clearly demonstrates the link between a two-way flow of students and key indicators of economic competitiveness such as trade and foreign direct investment.

Moreover, working with university students is an approach that has long-term and sustainable benefits. Canadian university students are Canada's future business and civic leaders, diplomats, policy-makers and professionals and the emerging drivers for shaping and securing Canada's place in the world. At the same time, international students who choose to come to Canada to study at Canadian universities are often the emerging

⁶ Bill Graham, Notes for an Address at the University of Toronto Symposium: *Creating Knowledge, Strengthening Nations: The Changing Role of Higher Education*, November 2002: 4.

⁷ Conference Board of Canada, *The Economic Implications of International Education for Canada and Nine Comparator Countries: A Comparison of International Education Activities and Economic Performance*. Prepared by the CBC for DFAIT, Ottawa, September 1999.

leaders in their own countries and catalysts for building strong bilateral relations with Canada once they return home.

It is also important to recall Ekos Research's findings: cosmopolitanism and internationalism are becoming values which define the Canadian identity. A two-way flow of students is an effective means of supporting and responding to these Canadian values.

Given these anticipated foreign policy, trade and cultural benefits, Canada must better leverage the potential for international education to contribute to our long-term security and prosperity. In particular, the federal government needs to do more to help Canadian students get international experience. In 2000, less than 1 per cent of Canadian university students participated in international exchanges and the government spent less than one dollar per capita on international education programs. Studies show that lack of resources is the key barrier to more Canadian students taking advantage of these opportunities. Canada's lack of support runs counter to the trends in other countries where student exchanges are recognized as a key mechanism for promoting other foreign policy objectives. Such was the case of the flagship *Erasmus* mobility program in the European Union, which was seen as a critical complement to the region's economic, cultural and social integration process.

Young Canadians are also calling for a greater emphasis on international education. For example, Canada 25, an organization devoted to engaging Canadian youth in the public policy debate, raised the importance of "brain circulation" – that is, bringing more international students to Canada, sending more Canadian students abroad and tapping into existing Canadian alumni networks overseas – in a brief to the federal government as part of the innovation strategy consultation. In particular, Canada 25 notes that "the government can help by ensuring international education opportunities are more widely accessible" to Canadian students through increased financial support.⁸

Support for a two-way flow of students is a proactive, positive measure that should be part of the department's strategic foreign policy response to the new international realities.

⁸Canada 25, *Summary Memo: Canada 25's Response to the Innovation Strategy*, August 2002: 6.

Faculty and Canada's Foreign Policy

*At home, Canada's economic growth and job creation will depend on being competitive in world markets and attractive to investors. This requires an innovative society with a high level of skills, cutting-edge scientific expertise and extensive opportunities for learning. To succeed, Canada must find suitable foreign partners in investment, education and research....*⁹

Canadian university faculty members are key actors on the foreign policy scene. First, through extensive research and analytical expertise in a range of disciplines related to international affairs, they inform Canadian foreign policy development. Second, through their partnerships with academics and researchers overseas, they serve foreign and domestic policy objectives by addressing challenges that affect our global village and tapping into international expertise for Canada's benefit. AUCC research shows that there has been a growing interest in international research partnerships on the part of Canadian researchers and some important policy and programming changes at certain Canadian research granting agencies to promote such collaboration. However, as opposed to the European Union, for example, Canada has not yet developed a coherent international research collaboration policy framework for strategically leveraging this interest and capacity.

In our view, Canada must do more to maximize the potential of international academic and research cooperation to tackle global threats to human security, whether from disease, environmental degradation, displaced peoples etc. Canada has tremendous intellectual capacity to contribute to solving global problems, but has put in place few mechanisms for positioning Canadian expertise. In a global knowledge society, Canada can gain tremendous influence on the world stage using its highly qualified people.

At the same time, supporting these types of third pillar initiatives also serves our broader government objectives of innovation and branding Canada for its excellence, both of which help make us more competitive in the global economy, and therefore support our foreign policy priority of promoting prosperity. Canada's economic growth, its international leadership, and its quality of life depend on a robust research capacity and we must aim for a vision of **excellence in and for the world**.

This vision of Canadian international excellence requires a new imaginative spark. Our cultural industries should, and currently do, feature strongly in our stature in the world. Our commitment to this imaginative response should include investments in the intellectual and creative standing of Canadian culture. Moreover, in addition to becoming one of the top five countries in R&D investments, Canada requires a brand of excellence in innovation on the world stage. In this regard, DFAIT should look through

⁹ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. *A Dialogue on Foreign Policy*, 2003: Section 4, Page 3.

the foreign policy lens at ways to leverage the impressive recent investments that have been made in Canadian research, such as the Canada Research Chairs Program and the Networks of Centres of Excellence, and spearhead an effort to communicate to the world our considerable R&D commitments and achievements, as knowledge-based exports will be a key measure of success for Canada's continued economic growth.

As we assess Canada's opportunities to claim international leadership, the best prospects lie in a combination of our new R&D commitments, our civic and institutional values, and our quality of life. As an exporting country, the benefits will come in economic growth. As citizens of the world, the benefits will come in global improvements in quality of life.

Capturing the Benefits

We have thus far tried to demonstrate the importance of academic relations and collaborative research – through students and faculty – as effective strategies to bring a global vision to Canadian prosperity and security. We will now suggest new targeted measures for the department to consider in order to strategically capture the foreign policy benefits of globalization of higher education and research.

Partnerships with Emerging Powers

The dialogue paper notes that given their emerging influence in the world, burgeoning middle class and important economic and political reforms, "China, India, Mexico and Brazil present Canadians with new opportunities for productive partnerships; seizing these opportunities will demand effective strategies and sustained attention".¹⁰ These are also countries in which there are existing university relations that can be leveraged effectively. It is also important to keep in mind existing multilateral mechanisms, such as the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE), which also represent important leverage opportunities.

DFAIT should therefore establish a series of pilot projects for higher education and research cooperation, including student exchanges, with these "emerging powers". Based on several discussions AUCC has had with colleagues and officials abroad, the governments of these countries are likely willing to make investments in such bilateral programs which would serve as important levers to enhancing stronger economic, social and political ties. For example, these are all countries with emerging expertise in important fields of science which have global implications. Canada would do well to strengthen its bilateral research collaboration with such countries, as many others in the OECD are doing. DFAIT should also expand its network of S & T counsellors at Canadian embassies to include these countries in order to strategically deliver enhanced S&T services.

¹⁰ Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. *A Dialogue on Foreign Policy*, 2003: Section 4, Page 3.

Relations with the United States

Second, the dialogue paper raises the question of how to strengthen and manage our unique relationship with the United States and, in particular, how best to engage the Americans in discussions to promote mutual prosperity and security while maintaining our unique Canadian identity and values. In our view, enhancing the flagship Canada-U.S. Fulbright Program is one positive step towards fostering on-going understanding and good relations with the United States and broadening the critical mass of Canadian scholars (from a broad range of fields in the arts and sciences) with in-depth knowledge of our most important bilateral partner. As the program's Executive Director, Dr. Michael Hawes, noted in a recent appearance before the parliamentary committee responsible for foreign affairs, this initiative "offers the potential for a very substantial multiplier effect". In particular, the recent creation of a network of visiting research chairs (in such critical bilateral issues as trade negotiation, ecological and environmental studies and borders and security) at universities in Canada and the United States represent "the opportunity to target areas of special interest to Canada and develop capacity", thus ensuring a critical long-term investment in the Canada-U.S. relationship.¹¹

Relations in the Americas

Third, if pilot projects with Mexico and Brazil are successful, the department should consider a broader higher education and research cooperation program for the Americas. The dialogue paper raises the issue of how to better strengthen Canada's relations and role in the Americas, given that the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas and growing democratization in the region have created "the potential for Canada to become more closely linked with the hemisphere".¹² In our view, such a program would be a significant contribution on the part of Canada to parallel economic integration by promoting closer relations in the hemisphere in a range of fields, including the sciences, technology, arts and humanities and have a lasting impact through the exchange of people, knowledge, understanding and ideas.

In considering such an option, it is important to recognize the existing broad support among political leaders in the Americas for such an initiative. For example, the 2001 Summit of the Americas Action Plan calls for supporting the mobility of students and faculty between countries of the hemisphere to provide new opportunities to take part in the global knowledge economy and increase cross-cultural knowledge and language skills. Furthermore, in AUCC's discussions with several Latin American ambassadors, all have indicated a particular interest in seeing new programs in higher education and research collaboration (especially faculty and student exchanges) developed with Canada in response to this call for action to support other regional political and trade objectives.

¹¹ Dr. Michael Hawes, Statement to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, April 8, 2003: 9.

¹² Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *A Dialogue on Foreign Policy*, 2003: Section 1: Page 3.

Relations with the Developing World

Finally, with a view to "globalizing prosperity" as called for in the dialogue paper, the federal government needs to consider measures to strengthen support for higher education and research in developing countries in order to build local capacity to generate and adapt knowledge for national and social development to ensure that all societies benefit from the global knowledge economy and contribute to global security.

With respect to research collaboration with developing countries, a number of European countries, as well as the World Bank, are increasingly cognizant of the importance of targeting official development assistance, as well as mainstream research funding, to strengthen Southern research. They are doing this in a number of key ways: promoting North-South research collaboration, building local research capacity in the South and supporting research in the North on issues of importance in the South.

While Canada is making some progress in this area, we need to develop a more coherent international research collaboration policy framework with a view to better integrating the North-South dimension. DFAIT should be a key player in this emerging dialogue with CIDA, IDRC and other federal departments and granting councils. The department should also consider expanding its network of S & T counsellors to include representation in key developing countries. It would also be important for Canada to maximize the benefits, through increased financial support, to existing multilateral mechanisms fund support developing country scholars, such as the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie and the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan.

A Word on Globalization of Higher Education and GATS

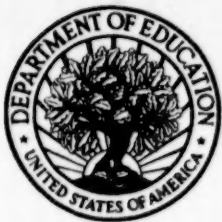
In today's global knowledge economy, efforts to promote globalization of higher education and research through programs such as the ones suggested above serve Canada's foreign policy objectives, as well as contribute to improving lives of individuals around the world. In short, higher education and research cooperation at an international level turns the forces of globalization to societies' advantage.

At the same time, however, growing demand for higher education worldwide coupled with limited capacity in many countries are fuelling the growth of a global higher education market. While we believe that cross border higher education can play an important role in expanding access to higher education worldwide, AUCC does not believe that education should be part of the GATS negotiations. AUCC is committed to working with its sister organization around the world to articulate an international policy framework to offer a different approach for encouraging cross border higher education and for dealing with the challenges posed by globalization of higher education.

Conclusion

AUCC and its members have welcomed the opportunity to provide input to DFAIT as part of its reflection on the foreign policy framework to guide Canada's role in the world. In this brief, we have argued that projecting Canadian values abroad must be viewed as having a central role in supporting the other two pillars of Canadian foreign policy. In this regard, we have demonstrated the essential place that Canadian universities through their students, faculty and relations with partners overseas have in supporting Canadian foreign policy interests in a number of strategic and sustainable ways. In closing, we leave the last word on the central role of academic relations and collaborative research in Canadian foreign policy to Canada's Foreign Minister, "Education is one of the best means by which we can project Canadian values and our unique experiences, and promote the Canadian model of society".¹³

¹³ Bill Graham, Notes for an Address at the University of Toronto Symposium: *Creating Knowledge, Strengthening Nations: The Changing Role of Higher Education*, November 2002: 3.



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